

Bureau for Remediation and Redevelopment

www.dnr.wi.gov/org/aw/rr/

Helping restore & protect the environmental and economic health of Wisconsin communities.

Recognized Nationally For Brownfields Innovations

Wisconsin is consistently one of the top states in the nation for incentives to promote cleanup and reuse of brownfields.

- The National Association of Local Government Environmental Professionals and the Northeast-Midwest Institute recognized our brownfields efforts as among the top six in the nation in their report *Unlocking Brownfields: Keys to Community Revitalization*.
- Wisconsin DNR received the largest federal brownfields grant in the nation, \$4 million, to initiate the Remediation and Redevelopment (RR) Program's "Ready for Reuse" initiative, a new brownfields grant and revolving loan program to help communities investigate and clean up contaminated properties.
- The RR Program satisfied 152 requests for fee-based redevelopment assistance, including negotiated cleanup agreements, liability clarification letters and certificates of completion for cleanups.
- Finalizing one of the nation's first "One Cleanup Program" Memorandum of Agreements with EPA; the agreement will delegate more of EPA's regulatory authority to the DNR via the RR Program.
- Continued to facilitate and foster our partnership with the Wisconsin Brownfields Study Group, the state-wide task force charged with recommending improvements to the state's brownfields initiatives. *Unlocking Brownfields* gives credit to the Study Group's leadership for why Wisconsin "has been on the leading edge of brownfields policy, program initiatives, and cleanups since the mid-1990s."
- Wisconsin leads the country in utilizing the federal brownfields tax incentive, which allows taxpayers to claim environmental remediation costs as deductions in the year incurred; since 1998 when the incentive first became available, Wisconsin has utilized this incentive 23 times, tops in the nation.

Approved More Than 500 Cleanups of Contaminated Properties

- Approved more than 500 new cleanups in 2004, raising the total to more than 13,000 approved cleanups.
- Helped 95 percent or more of the cleanups undertaken by responsible parties proceed without enforcement.
- Responded to nearly 100 requests for detailed, fee-based technical reviews.
- Contacted more than 500 inactive responsible parties who responded by resuming site investigation and cleanup work.
- Initiated a new audit program for cleanups previously approved with required institutional controls (e.g. maintaining pavement over residual soil contamination to protect public health).

Enacted New Legislation and Rules to Support Environmental Cleanup and Redevelopment

- The governor signed two brownfield bills on Earth Day, April 22, to promote environmental cleanup and redevelopment in Wisconsin. One law authorizes DNR to enter into an agreement with EPA to create and administer a brownfields revolving loan fund (RLF) for distributing grants and loans to local governments. The second law gives the state authority to contract with an insurance provider to set up an optional insurance program for environmental cleanups.
- Recommended legislation that was enacted to improve the industry-sponsored reimbursement program for environmental costs at dry-cleaner contaminated sites.
- Held public hearings and improved state rules governing the DNR's Brownfields Site Assessment Grant program.



*Governor Doyle signs brownfield and drycleaner bills on Earth Day
(DNR photo)*

Protected Public Health and Saved Money through Prevention and Control of Toxic Spills

- We partnered with state and local emergency responders at more than 900 hazardous substance spills.
- We help avoid hundreds of other spills through education and prevention efforts.
- We conducted an animal waste demonstration project for applicators, which became a video we are using for future spill education to applicators.
- We conducted outreach to schools about the dangers of mercury exposure and contamination (many schools still have old supplies of mercury).

Helped Grow Wisconsin's Economy Through Cleanup and Redevelopment

We help turn former contaminated sites – brownfields – into economically productive properties. Properties receiving public assistance via brownfields grants and technical reviews have increased the state's property tax base by millions of dollars, provided thousands of new, full-time jobs and leveraged millions of local government and private dollars all across Wisconsin.

- In the spring the DNR awarded 11 Greenspace and Public Facilities grants totaling \$1 million to 10 Wisconsin communities to help clean up contaminated properties for public use. The program is one of the first brownfields-to-greenspace initiatives in the country.
- In June, Governor Doyle announced \$1.7 Million in DNR Brownfields Site Assessment Grants (SAG). This RR grant program funded 50 projects that will begin the process to redevelop brownfields in 35 communities. Since 2000, the DNR has awarded 212 grants worth \$6.56 million to more than 100 communities in Wisconsin.

Provided State-Funded Response at Orphan Sites

When a responsible party is unknown, unable or unwilling to conduct environmental restoration, the RR Program protects human health and the environment with a state-funded cleanup.

- In 2004, the DNR recovered approximately \$2.13 million in state expenses that had been used to address contamination at priority sites, where responsible parties would not proceed with investigation or cleanup.
- DNR also received the state's largest single cost-recovery ever – \$1.95 million – from one location.
- In addition, the state recovered \$159,000 for environmental cleanup work at other priority sites and \$16,266 at six spill response sites where immediate state-funded action averted more serious environmental damage.
- DNR staff also initiated work at 10 new contaminated sites around the state.



Governor Doyle presents a Greenspace grant award to the city of Milwaukee (DNR photo).

Provided Accessible and In-Depth Public Information

- Program staff continued to improve one of the nation's most comprehensive web sites on environmental contamination, investigation, cleanup, liability, redevelopment and financial aid, with more than 30,000 web hits received; we also added and enhanced web pages for local government officials and environmental professionals.
- The RR Program maintained records at more than 5,000 active investigations and cleanups of contaminated properties in an Internet-accessible format.
- Attended more than 100 meetings with local officials to provide assistance on cleanup and redevelopment of contaminated properties.
- Conducted seven regional "consultant day" conferences for more than 200 state and local officials, environmental professionals and the general public.

For more information on any of these initiatives, please contact Mark Giesfeldt, Director, Bureau for Remediation and Redevelopment, mark.giesfeldt@dnr.state.wi.us, 608/267-7562, or visit our Web site: www.dnr.wi.gov/org/aw/rr/